

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PRETOR 04400 011421Z
ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-12 ISO-00 HA-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00
PM-05 H-02 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02
SP-02 SS-15 ICA-20 OMB-01 ACDA-12 TRSE-00 /119 W
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P 011327Z AUG 78

FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1940
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY
INFO AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
AMEMBASSY GABORONE
AMEMBASSY LAGOS
AMEMBASSY LILONGWE
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO
AMCONSUL DURBAN

UNCLAS PRETORIA 4400

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: MOPS, PINT, RH, MZ

SUBJECT: RHODESIA: ATTACK AGAINST MOZAMBIQUE ENDS

REF: PRETORIA 4365

1. PRESS ACCOUNTS SAY THAT RHODESIA ANNOUNCED ON JULY 31 THAT THE "SELF-DEFENSE OPERATION MOUNTED AGAINST ZANLA-MUGABE TERRORIST BASES IN MOZAMBIQUE HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED" AND ALL RHODESIAN TROOPS RETURNED. THE ANNOUNCEMENT CLAIMED THAT TEN ZANLA BASES IN MOZAMBIQUE HAD BEEN "EFFECTIVELY NEUTRALIZED." A MILITARY SPOKESMAN IN MAPUTO IS REPORTED TO HAVE SAID THAT TEN PERSONS WERE KILLED AND 110 WOUNDED. THE RHODESIANS CLAIMED NO LOSSES ON THEIR SIDE. A RHODESIAN SPOKESMAN REPORTEDLY ADMITTED LOSSES FOR ZANLA BUT WOULD RELEASE NO NUMBER. HE SAID THE "MATERIAL WAS RECOVERED
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AND A CERTAIN AMOUNT DESTROYED, BUT THE OBJECT WAS
DISRUPTION."

2. CONCERNING THE RATIONALE FOR THE ATTACK, PRESS ACCOUNTS SUBSEQUENT TO THAT REPORTED REFTEL GAVE IN FULL THE COMMUNIQUE ISSUED BY THE RHODESIAN MILITARY COMMAND ON JULY 30. IT READ:
QUOTE. THERE IS CLEAR EVIDENCE THAT THE CEASEFIRE EXERCISE

IS BEGINNING TO WORK WITHIN RHODESIA AND THERE IS INTELLIGENCE THAT THERE ARE OTHER GROUPS WHO ARE SHOWING EVERY INDICATION OF CO-OPERATING WITH THE INTERIM GOVERNMENT. EXTERNALLY BASED TERRORISTS WHO WISH TO PARTICIPATE IN THE INTERIM GOVERNMENT'S CEASEFIRE PLAN SHOULD COME HOME IN PEACE. NOTHING MUST BE ALLOWED TO PREJUDICE THIS ENCOURAGING INTERNAL DEVELOPMENT, NOR MUST HOSTILE INFILTRATIONS BE ALLOWED TO OBSTRUCT IT. SELF-DEFENSE OPERATIONS AGAINST EXTERNALLY BASED TERRORISTS WHO OPPOSE THE INTERIM GOVERNMENT AND ITS STATED PROMISE OF A TRUE DEMOCRATIC FUTURE WILL BE MOUNTED AND WILL CONTINUE TO BE MOUNTED." END QUOTE.

3., ANTHONY RIDER OF THE RAND DAILY MAIL REPORTS THAT, WHILE

THE OFFICIAL REASONS FOR THE RAID ARE THE GOVERNMENT'S DETERMINATION TO SEE THE INTERNAL SETTLEMENT THROUGH, "OBSERVERS IN SALISBURY SEE IT AS AN ATTEMPT TO STRENGTHEN THE GOVERNMENT'S NEGOTIATING POSITION. HE REPORTS THAT THE INTERIM GOVERNMENT WILL NOT GO TO THE NEGOTIATING TABLE IN A WEAK POSITION AND HAD HOPED TO BOOST WHITE MORALE WITH BOTH POLITICAL AND MILITARY VICTORIES. THE POLITICAL VICTORY - THE PASSAGE OF THE HELMS AMENDMENT - FELL THROUGH AND THAT REPORTEDLY PROMPTED THE TIMING OF THE RAID. RIDER REPORTS ALSO THAT IT WOULD HELP THE MORALE OF THE ARMED FORCES WHO HAVE BEEN FRUSTRATED BY THE PASSIVE CONDUCT OF THE WAR.

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4. ONE ACCOUNT STATED IT HAD BEEN "RELIABLY" LEARNED THAT NKOMO BASED IN FEIRA REGION OF ZAMBIA HAD ALSO BEEN HIT. RIDER'S REPORT, HOWEVER, SAYS THAT IS NOT THE CASE. HE CLAIMS THAT NKOMO HAS BEEN LEFT ALONE IN BOTH THE MILITARY AND PROPAGANDA EFFORTS AS A PART OF SMITH'S CONTINUING TACTICS " TO OUTFLANK THE MILITANT SHONA-ZANU AXIS AND TO DEAL IF POSSIBLE WITH THE - IN WHITE EYES - MORE AMENABLE NKOMO ZAPU LINEUP."

5. THE ONLY REPORTED REACTIONS TO DATE COME FROM ZANU (SITHOLE) WHICH CALLED THE RAID "ILL ADVISED AND DISAPPOINTING."
EDMONDSON

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